K Ā K I Ṇ Ī .

Kākiṇī is frequently referred to as Kākiṇī, Kākaṇa, and Kāgiṇī in Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit literature. It means coin of a small value or a small sum of money or a small weight. Earliest mention of Kākiṇī is found in the Arthaśāstra of Kautilya. According to it, it was one-fourth of the Māshaka[1] and is prescribed as the fee of the Superintendent of Weights, to be paid by traders,[2] as the wages of the manufacturer of the object from one pala of lead[3] and as the hire of the gambling die.[4] Kākaṇī as a weight is also mentioned in the Arthaśāstra for weighing gold[5]; but how it was related to the other weights of gold is no where mentioned.

There after the Kākiṇī is referred to in the Jātakas.[6] Patañjali's Mahābhāshya[7] and in various Buddhist commentaries as a coin but none of them

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1. Text I, p.205.
2. Text I, p.261.
3. Text II, p.121.
4. Text II, p.112, 165.
5. Text II, p.216, 217, 221.
6. Jātaka, I. 120; I. 419.
7. केवलायाश्चेति बभ्रव्यम् काविणाकम् ।

furnish any idea about its weight or value. The Chulla-sethi Jātaka mentions the price of a dead mouse as one Kākaṇī. So Bhandarkar feels that it was almost the lowest money price of the day to serve as a food to a cat in the tavern. This smaller token was intimately connected not only with the commercial life but also with the daily intercourse of the period to which these tales belong.[8]

The value of Kākiṇī as one-fourth Māshaka assigned by Kautilya perhaps continued during all this period. Nārada Smriti, dated in the Gupta period,[9] gives the same value for it. But in the later period, in about eleventh -twelvth Centuries A.D. it was valued at 20 'Cowries'. Līlāvatī,[10] Vaijayantī and Medinikośa,[11] which belong to this period equate it with 20 Kapardakas or Varātakas. Śrīdharāchārya commenting on Gaṇitasāra gives the same equation i.e. 20 Kaudi (Cowries). It may also be interesting to point out that Medini-Kośa calls Kākiṇī also as Pāda-paṇa. As we have seen

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8. Carmichael Lectures, p.79.
9. Nārada Smriti, Parisishta, V.58.
10. Vaijayantī, p.247, Ll.11-12.
11. Medinikośa, p.88.

above Arthaśāstra and Nārada-Smriti calls it Pāda-Māshas. If Paṇa and Māsha in the present context are one and the same is difficult to s ay.

Multiple and sub-multiple coins are suggested on the basis of some commentaries on Panini's Ashṭādhyāyī. Kātyāyana in his Vārtikas refers to Kākaṇī and Ardha-Kākaṇī. Patañjali in an explanation says that an object purchased for 1½ Kākaṇi was called Adhyardha-Kākaṇika, for 2 Kākaṇīs, dvi-Kākaṇīka, and for a single Kākaṇī, Kākanikā, Kāśikā adds to it Tri-Kākaṇī.Agrawala (V.S.) thinks that all these denominations had their own coins. He has tried to identify silver Tri-Kākaṇī and Dvi-Kākaṇī, Adhyardha Kākaṇī and Kākaṇī coins from amongst those tiny coins which were found in Ujjain and Bhilsa area and were in the Advani collection. These coins weigh from 1.9 to 2.7 grains. According to Agrawala the standard weight for the Tri-Kākaṇī was 2.7 grains, and for Dvi-Kākaṇī 1.8 grains. According to him the weight of Adhyardha-Kākaṇī should have been ¾ Rattis or 1.35 grains and some coins of the above mentioned collection weigh 1.3 to 1.o grains. Kākaṇī according to him was ½ Ratti

or 0.9 grains in weight.[12]

The only sub-multiple which may be associated with *Kākaṇī* is *Ardha Kākaṇī*, mentioned by Kautilya and Kātyāyana. According to the former it was of copper and was produced at the mint.[13] According to Bhandarkar a copper *Half-Kākaṇī* must have a weight one-eighth of a Masha, that is one-eight of five *Rattīs*, and as one *Ratti* is equivalent to 1.83 grains. Copper half *Kākaṇī* must have equalled 1.14 grains.[14] Agrawala (V.S.) postulates silver *Ardha-Kākiṇī* of ½ *Ratti* or 0.9 Grains. He also thinks that there was a *Raupya-Pāda Kākaṇī* (silver quarter-Kākaṇī). One of these coins found in the Kabul river weighs only 0.1358 grains.[15] Gupta (P.L.) has gravely doubted the existence of any of these tiny silver coins. He has pointed out, firstly that it is difficult to say that the *Rattis* of the period was necessarily of 1.8 grains, which Agrawala has presumed. Secondly, the actual specimens, with the

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12. *J.N.S.I.*, XIII, p.166 ff.

13. Text I, p.205.

14. *Carmichael Lectures*, p.112.

15. *J.N.S.I.* III, p.167.

weight of which, the weights of various denominations have been identified, were found in the river beds, where they would have had gone through heavy corrosions. So, their present weight would not be the same as their original weight.[16] Gupta is perfectly justified in his objections. It may not be possible to assign any definite denominations to these minute coins; but the existence of tiny silver coins can not be denied. They may only be *Kākaṇī* or its multiples and not sub-multiples.

16. *Punch-marked coins of Ancient India*, (unpublished thesis), p.191.